

A Typical Day for First Grade

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| 8:00-8:20 | "Let's Get Organized!" Unpack / Notes to Teacher/Morning Work |
| 8:20-8:30 | Prayers / Pledge Attendance |
| 8:30-8:50 | Number Corner |
| 8:50-9:40 | Handwriting Without Tears Writer's Workshop |
| 9:45-10:15 | Snack Recess |
| 10:15-11:05 | Guided Reading/Daily 5 Comprehension Grammar Phonics Phonemic Awareness Sight Words Fluency |
| 11:15-12:05 | Prayers-Lunch- Recess |
| 12:05-12:25 | Read to Self |
| 12:30-1:20 | Math |
| 1:25 - 2:05 | Specials |
| 2:10-2:40 | Social Studies/Science |
| 2:40 | Religion |
| 3:10 | General Dismissal |

FIRST GRADE CURRICULUM

We are happy to have your child enrolled here at Our Lady of the Wayside School. First grade is the introduction to formal education and it will prove to be an exciting and enjoyable experience, even challenging at times. We will do our very best to continue the work that you have started at home and in your child's early educational experiences. Our goal is to help your child to further develop his/her skills, both academically and socially, as well as encourage them to grow spiritually. We strive to develop high self-esteem in each of our students.

DESCRIPTION OF OUR PROGRAMS:

Religion: Our Religion series is We Believe by Sadlier, Inc. The book emphasizes the child's relationship with Jesus. We correlate Bible stories and special seasonal lessons which follow the liturgical year. Formal prayers are introduced and practiced daily. Typically, children attend all-school liturgies, Holy Day masses, as well as special liturgies. During this pandemic, we are attending once a month with a limited primary group, and socially distancing, with 3 students per pew.

We strive to teach the children to live their faith as well as to practice it throughout the day by sharing, showing kindness, showing respect and consideration for others in words and actions, etc.

Attendance at Sunday Mass is strongly encouraged (during non-pandemic times). During Mass, please encourage your first grader to follow along with the songs, say the prayers, listen to the readings and the homily, and behave appropriately (including standing, kneeling, folding his/her hands; etc.) Children at this age should not play with toys or eat snacks during Mass.

First grade children are in their first year of preparation for the reception of the Eucharist. Much of what we teach in first grade Religion class is the "groundwork" for the formal instruction of sacramental preparation in second grade.

Reading

First Grade uses Guided Reading to help differentiate reading for all the different levels of readers in our first grade classrooms. Students will be assessed to determine their reading level, and small group instruction will be provided to guide them at an instructional level. During our reading block we will teach comprehension strategies using CCC Collaborative Literacy: Making Meaning. A week's lesson begins with a read-aloud, followed by a class discussion of what the text is about. The same read-aloud is used on subsequent

days to teach a comprehension strategy and to give guided practice. We also work on high-frequency words, oral vocabulary, phonemic awareness, phonics/spelling, grammar/mechanics and writing skills. Most importantly, students will develop a strong love of reading.

Raz-kids is an additional on-line resource we will use to support reading. Students will have reading assignments on-line using books that are at their independent reading level. More information regarding usernames and passwords will be sent home after the guided reading assessments have been completed.

As a parent, you can encourage your young reader to "read" as much as possible by providing a wealth of books for him/her to look through and find words that are identifiable. You should provide a special time together to read aloud stories.

Math:

Kindergarten through fourth grade uses Bridges for our math program. This program incorporates a calendar routine that encompasses a variety of math concepts including patterning, predicting, addition, subtraction and place value. The students work in whole group, small groups, partners (during non-pandemic times), and independently to solve problems. It is a hands-on program with many engaging manipulatives and activities to make math meaningful. It is aligned with our Archdioceses and the Common Core Math Standards.

Phonics/Spelling:

What does spelling look like in first grade? First Graders begin the year using their "inventive spelling" and usually represents the sounds of letters that are heard in each word (which often does not look like adult spelling of words). We encourage the emergent writer to "spell" words the best way he/she can by listening carefully to the sounds in the word. All efforts are praised but as we learn about spelling patterns students are encouraged to demonstrate the correct spelling of words and to correct errors. The way the first graders learn about spelling patterns is through **Words Their Way**. This program differentiates spelling instruction and allows students to discover patterns within words through word sort activities. Students are assessed on the patterns that they study and are allowed to continue on to the next set of words when they demonstrate an understanding of the words they are working with. Spelling is sequential and patterns must be mastered in order to continue on into the next spelling stage.

Handwriting: We are using Handwriting Without Tears. This program allows all students the opportunity to be successful with a multisensory learning of the letters. First grade begins with a review of capital letters and then moves on quickly to the lower case letters. In first grade, it is important to develop strong handwriting habits. We always encourage neatness and proper formation when doing any written work.

Writing:

In First Grade we use CCC Collaborative Learning: Being a Writer. The first unit of study will be "The Writing Community." In the beginning of the year, students see the teacher modeling thinking aloud about what to write and draw. The guided writing helps students by using sentence starters, and students practice on wipe-off boards before writing a story. Writing units include Narratives, Nonfiction Writing, and Opinion Writing.

Science:

First Graders will use the scientific method of asking questions, hypothesizing, planning, experimenting, collecting data, and reporting on their findings. The major units of study will be Matter (Solids, Liquids, and Gases), and Plants (Life Cycles).

Social Studies:

We also have two major units of study for social studies. Our first unit is on Communities. In this unit of study we will define communities and learn about the different types of communities (urban, rural, and suburban). We will also learn about community helpers and work in small groups to research and report on these different communities. The second unit is America.

DISCIPLINE:

Children are expected to obey classroom and general school rules at all times. First Grade children are capable of understanding these rules and need to abide by them so that learning can take place. Good listening habits and following directions are important to their progress. We want the children to discover the joy of learning without the disruption caused from misconduct. Good behavior promotes a positive learning environment. Your cooperation and encouragement in this respect is needed and appreciated.

LET'S HAVE A GOOD YEAR!

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HELPFUL TIPS, HINTS, AND HAPPENINGS IN FIRST GRADE

- TARDINESS The school opens at 8 AM to allow students a chance to unpack and be ready to begin working at 8:20. Students coming in at 8:20 are not ready to begin their day and often rush or miss out on important routines and lessons.
- LABEL BELONGINGS Please label all of your child's clothing and supplies. (Children often forget what belongs to them or sometimes there are duplicate items.
- DRESS CODE Please make sure any hair accessories are within code. No accessories should take away from the uniform look. All shirts should be tucked in unless they have the elastic band at the bottom.
- BIRTHDAYS We plan to make your child's birthday special. Only non-edible treats can be distributed to classmates. Birthday invitations are only allowed to be distributed if all the class is invited, or all the girls/boys.
- ROOM PARTIES We will have a party to celebrate Halloween, Christmas, and Valentine's Day. The Room Mothers will organize and handle the details. They will contact you for assistance. Only the homeroom teacher will be present during parties during this pandemic.
- LIBRARY CARDS: We strongly suggest that you get your child his/her own library card from the public library. We encourage your child to use it often and borrow books that are interesting to him/her.
- GRADING: We use a positive approach in marking all students' work. Happy faces, stars, stamps, stickers, or written remarks are used to evaluate. Our goal is to build self-esteem and make it as constructive as possible.
- HOMEWORK: Homework will be assigned as warranted for reinforcement of the lesson. There will be no assignments sent home over the weekend. In order to establish good habits, we ask that your child takes these assignments seriously and completes them on a timely basis.
- "TAKE-HOME-FOLDERS" These folders provide one way to communicate with you. Each afternoon, papers and notes are sent home to you in this folder. Each morning, please send back homework, notes, or communications in this folder to class (or send back the empty folder so it can be "filled" again that day). It is important to check

this folder each day, review your child's schoolwork and give appropriate encouragement, and read memos and notes from the teacher

- ABSENCES Please notify the office regarding the child's absence and always follow-up with a written note which states the reason for the absence to the teacher. This is your child's admittance back into class.

VACATION ABSENCES When a child is absent due to vacation, please notify the classroom teacher in advance. All daily work, as well as homework, will be saved and held until the child returns. The child will be expected to complete all assignments by a date mutually agreed upon.